

Serial No. 09/057,313
Amendment
September 28, 2000

Claim 22, line 4, replace "said containers" with --each container--.

Claim 22, line 8, replace "said containers" with --each container--.

Claim 24, line 5, before "lifting" add --individually--.

Claim 24, line 5, replace "said containers" with --each container--.

Claim 25, line 4, after "vehicle" add having a body portion and a gripping
portion including a spreader attachment, said gripping portion being capable of being raised
and lowered, rotated, and inclined relative to said body portion, said vehicle engaging said
container at a top wall of said container--.

Remarks

Claims 16, 22, 24 and 25 have been amended. Review and reconsideration of the application is requested.

Claims 16, 22 and 23 are rejected as being anticipated by Japanese Application No. 5-338816 to Ikuta, or as defining obvious subject matter over the Ikuta reference in light of U.S. Pat. No. 4,325,667. In response, independent claims 16 and 22 have been amended to specify that each container is individually lifted and transported by the vehicle. Claim 24 is similarly amended to specify that each container is individually lifted and transported by the vehicle. It is noted that claim 27 includes the limitation that each container is individually lifted and transported by the vehicle, and claim 27 is rejected as defining obvious subject matter over the Ikuta reference in light of U.S. Pat. No. 3,514,002 to Allegri et al. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the reasons discussed below. Furthermore, to the extent such a rejection would be applied to amended claims 16, 22 or 24, such a rejection is not believed to be proper for the reasons discussed below.

In the Ikuta reference, a plurality of containers 3 are loaded onto a self propelled pallet 4. The pallet is then self-propelled over a ramp and onto a container ship 1, and is fixed to the ship by stoppers 5. Thus, each pallet is secured to the ship, and each pallet is "dedicated" to